

## News From Southern Shores Town Hall

### Wednesday, October 19, 2005

#### **\*\*Reminder\*\*Candidate Forums**

The League of Women Voters of Dare County is sponsoring “Municipal Elections 2005 Candidate Forums”. A forum will be held **\*\*Tonight\*\*** Wednesday, October 19, 7 PM in the Pitts Center for Southern Shores voters who will be electing a Mayor and a Council Member on November 8. Come ask the candidates your questions and hear their views and visions.

#### **Phragmites – Another Weed We Don’t Need**

Michele Drocsz of the [North Carolina Coastal Reserve](#) and Susan Ruiz-Evans of the [North Carolina State University Cooperative Extension Service – Dare County Center](#) gave 20 Southern Shores residents an eye-opening workshop October 18 on the problems presented by [\*phragmites australis\*](#) and other invasive weeds expanding throughout the region.

Phragmites (pronounced “frag-MI-tees”) is found in ditches and wetlands where it crowds out native vegetation to the extent a so-called monoculture is created. Without a plant diversity, birds and other small animals that feed on or find shelter in the different wetland plants diminish in that area. One outcome of uncontrolled phragmites growth is the loss of wildlife and the aesthetics of diverse plant life.

Additionally, the workshop participants learned that the root system of phragmites is so thick and tightly intertwined that phragmites roots can keep aquatic life from using the wetlands as a nursery area. This lowers the overall stock of fish and other beneficial aquatic life. Furthermore, the tight root system can actually raise the effective level of the marsh and thus cause stormwater problems and also decreases the stormwater cleansing action wetlands provide residential, commercial and agricultural areas.

Phragmites has been found along Ginguite Creek and is now being found in some locations within the Southern Shores Canal System. For most people curious about phragmites, it is most easily seen in the ditches along the east side of the Bypass (NC12) in Kill Devil Hills just north of Kmart.

So what can be done? Phragmites is a tough plant – very tough. That’s partly why phragmites has become so invasive. The workshop presenters review several ways to control phragmites. The most important thing is to correctly identify phragmites and then attack the problem as early as possible. For existing small stands of phragmites, cutting it down low and mashing it under water may work but the property owner may need to cover it with thick black plastic and let it suffocate. For larger stands of phragmites, aquatic herbicides sprayed by certified applicators may be the only effective removal.

Property owners who think they may have phragmites on their land (wetlands, ditches, etc.) should take steps to protect their property and their community by removing the phragmites as soon as possible. For additional assistance, property owners may contact the Dare County Center of the North Carolina State University Cooperative Extension Service by [email](#) or at 252-473-4290.

### **Dates To Remember:**

- League of Women Voters Forum, Wednesday, October 19, 2005, 7 PM, Pitts Center
- Long Range Planning Committee, Thursday, October 27, 2005, 3:30 PM, Pitts Center
- Town Council Meeting, Tuesday, November 1, 2005, 7 PM, Pitts Center
- Canal Dredging Project Update, November 10, 2005, 7 PM, Pitts Center

*If you need a police officer, anytime day or night, this weekend or any day of the year, please call Central Communications at 252-473-3444. Write that number down or pick up a free sticker at Town Hall. Keep this number by your phone and put it on your cell phone.*

For more information, contact the Southern Shores Town Hall, 252-261-2394, 252-255-0876 (fax), [info@southernshores-nc.gov](mailto:info@southernshores-nc.gov) , [www.southernshores-nc.gov](http://www.southernshores-nc.gov) .

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